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ABSTRACT

Four research questions are posed to explore the job satisfaction of high school journalism educators. A national random sample of 669 respondents shows that journalism educators are generally satisfied with their jobs--more so than teachers in other disciplines. Multiple regression analysis using Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory as a foundation reveals that a mix of intrinsic and extrinsic satisfiers are best predictors of teacher job satisfaction. The leading predictor is morale of the faculty. (Contains 17 references, and 2 figures and a table of data.) (Author/RS)

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JOB SATISFACTION OF HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISM EDUCATORS

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75-word Abstract

Four research questions are posed to explore the job satisfaction of high school journalism educators. A national random sample of 669 respondents shows that journalism educators are generally satisfied with their jobs -- more so than teachers in other disciplines. Multiple regression analysis using Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory as a foundation reveals that a mix of intrinsic and extrinsic satisfiers are best predictors of teacher job satisfaction. The leading predictor is morale of the faculty.

JOB SATISFACTION OF HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISM EDUCATORS

The purpose of this study is to examine the variables that predict secondary school journalism teachers' job satisfaction.

While a review of literature reveals that several thousand studies of job satisfaction have been done examining many different occupational fields, and more than 500 can be found related to teachers generally, only two specifically deal with high school journalism educators: Hawthorne (1990) and Dvorak (1993).

In the present study, one item on a questionnaire sent to a representative national sample of journalism educators specifically addressed job satisfaction: "All things considered, how satisfied are you with your present job?" Other variables on the questionnaire were thought to be factors that either contributed to job satisfaction or detracted from it. Respondents were not provided a working definition of "job satisfaction."

For purposes of this study, a definition from an earlier researcher, Vroom (1964), is used: Job satisfaction is "the positive orientation of an individual towards the work role which (the individual) is presently occupying."

Much like Hawthorne did in his 1990 study, the current study uses as a theoretical framework the work of Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1959) and Herzberg (1966). Through a series of in-depth interviews with Pittsburgh-area engineers and accountants, Herzberg, et al, (1959) developed a Motivation-Hygiene Theory of Job Satisfaction.

Six factors surfaced as the strongest determiners of job satisfaction: achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement and the possibility of growth. "The 'satisfier' factors were named *motivators*, since other findings of the study suggest that they are effective in motivating the individual to superior performance and effort." (Herzberg 1966).

The dissatisfiers were company policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, working conditions, status and job security. These dissatisfiers describe people's relationships to the context or environment surrounding the job.

> Since the dissatisfier factors essentially describe the environment and serve primarily to prevent job dissatisfaction, while having little effect on positive job attitudes, they have been named *hygiene* factors. Another term for them is *maintenance* factors. (Herzberg 1966)

The hygiene factors do not lead to job satisfaction, but their absence can lead to job dissatisfaction. Herzberg concluded that hygiene or maintenance aspects led to

dissatisfaction on the job because of a person's tendency to avoid unpleasantness. On the other hand, the motivator qualities led to job satisfaction because of the need for self-actualization and growth.

Some researchers, like Hawthorne, describe the motivators as intrinsic satisfiers because they include qualities that are found in the work itself and/or that fulfill deep personal needs for self-actualization. The hygiene or maintenance factors are sometimes described as extrinsic satisfiers because their presence doesn't lead to true job satisfaction but their absence can lead to dissatisfaction. They are largely environmental aspects of one's workplace, and as Herzberg has claimed, are not valid contributors to psychological growth.

Review of Literature

Studies are numerous, and oftentimes have ambiguous conclusions, when the various intrinsic and extrinsic factors are examined related to teacher job satisfaction.

An assumption underlying these studies -- and presumably most others -- is that if teachers are dissatisfied with their work, both they and their students will suffer. Conversely, if they are satisfied with their work, they will find congruence as teachers and their

students will be beneficiaries as well. This study's purpose is to explore teacher job satisfaction itself, leaving effects of it upon students for other studies.

Recent research of more than 600 teachers in a northeastern state found that teachers' perceptions of their levels of empowerment are significantly related to their perceptions of job satisfaction (Wu and Short, 1996). Self-efficacy and professional growth, two key intrinsic motivators, were found to be significant predictors of teacher job satisfaction. The researchers also found status, an extrinsic satisfier, to be a statistically significant predictor.

In a 1980 study by Oakes, 208 junior and senior high school English teachers were compared with 851 teachers of other subjects. A higher percentage of English teachers reported greater job satisfaction, and a higher percentage of them indicated that they would enter teaching again. They appeared to be more motivated by personal growth, an intrinsic satisfier, rather than by salary considerations, an extrinsic factor. Oakes' study found that English teachers differed from teachers of other subjects mainly in areas involving intrinsic aspects of teaching.

Another examination of English teachers by Bowers (1986) showed similar findings regarding personal growth as an intrinsic reward. Research involving 184 Indiana high school English teachers showed that job satisfaction was correlated closely with learning opportunities that meet the teachers' perceived needs for education (or opportunity for growth). She found that the more the opportunities exceeded the needs, the more satisfied the teachers were.

Similarly, a later study of 83 teachers by Bein, Anderson and Maes (1990) demonstrated that teachers who have a more internal locus of control are more satisfied with their jobs than those with a lesser sense of control. They concluded that a greater sense of personal control in the school setting contributes to a more positive sense of satisfaction with teaching as a career.

A study of 600 New York state high school teachers by Baughman (1996) showed these workplace factors as being significant determinants of job satisfaction: engaged teacher behavior, supportive principal behavior, academic emphasis of the school toward excellence, low frustrated teacher behavior (where emphasis is on the learning rather than the bureaucratic process), and morale.

In California a study of 64 teachers supported the premise that intrinsic variables contributed more to job

satisfaction than to dissatisfaction. Ulriksen (1996) found that teachers viewed the work itself, achievement, responsibility, recognition and the possibility of growth as job satisfiers.

Perie and Baker (1997) found some extrinsic factors related to working conditions that led to teacher satisfaction: administrative support, leadership, student behavior and school atmosphere. Compensation was also modestly related.

A Pennsylvania study of 114 teachers also looked at the role salary played in job satisfaction (Clarke and Keating, 1995). The researchers found that salary was neither a satisfier nor a dissatisfier. Rather, the factor most influential toward creating satisfaction was interaction with students while the most dissatisfying factor was lack of administrative support.

An examination of more than 750 teachers from three states found that administrative actions could create distinct working environments with schools that were highly predictive of teacher satisfaction. Among the variables that influenced satisfaction were accomplishment, recognition and affiliation (Anderman, 1991).

A study by Moore (1987) of 489 teachers found through interviews that those who emphasized their dedication

placed more value on intrinsic rewards than on career benefits. Those teachers felt rewarded on emotional and intuitive levels, and much of their satisfaction was derived by specific instances of positive interactions with students. In the same study, Moore discovered that more than half of the teachers surveyed were dissatisfied with teaching as a career mainly because of low status, poor pay and lack of power.

Most pertinent to the current study are Hawthorne's findings (1990). In open-ended questions, he found that high school journalism teachers expressed job satisfaction and dissatisfaction in ways consistent with the motivation-hygiene theory of Herzberg. Texas journalism educators indicated that responsibility, achievement, the work itself, and recognition were all satisfiers. On the other hand, his research found that work conditions, effects on personal life and salaries were associated with job dissatisfaction. That is, absence of those factors produced dissatisfaction.

Hawthorne concluded:

> Our results show that journalism teachers remain in the classroom because of their enjoyment of the subject area, their sense of freedom and independence in a creative, hands-on environment, for the praise and recognition that follows the publication of a superior newspaper or yearbook, and for the satisfaction in working with and

watching the progress of talented, motivated young people.

Methodology

All 17,781 secondary schools that included at least grades 10-12 and were listed in *Patterson's American Education 1997* were potential sources. Computers at Quill and Scroll headquarters, at The University of Iowa, include addresses for all the nation's high schools. From these data banks, we randomly selected 1,980 schools for the study based on the 1997-1998 school year. A seven-page survey was addressed to the journalism educator similar to one sent to a similar-sized random sample of journalism educators in the 1990-1991 school year. A postage-paid, self-addressed envelope was included in each, and after an initial mailing in February 1998, a follow-up to non-respondents was mailed in April 1998.

Altogether, 669 school personnel returned the survey for a response rate of almost 34 percent. By contrast, in 1991 when the same basic survey, cover letter and mailing procedures were used, we received 834 surveys for a return of nearly 44 percent. This comparison is disturbing -- and perhaps is a result of a society with increasing degrees of information overload, unwelcome phone solicitors and other intrusions on people's time.

However, we are confident in the survey's general validity. For example, several demographic findings were similar to those gathered in 1991. Also, with 669 respondents, the maximum sampling error for a random sample of this size is 3.7 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. Tolerances in sampling error were smaller than that as responses moved away from the 50th percentile.

We used the 1991 Dvorak study as the basis of comparison for the first two Research Questions:

RQ1: How does the degree of job satisfaction of journalism educators compare between 1998 and 1991 data, and how does it compare with public school educators in general?

RQ2: How many current educators, if given the choice, would become a teacher again if they could go back to their college days, and how do these data compare with similar data from 1991?

The latter research question is thought to be another way to validate a person's commitment to the field. It is thought to indicate, in a rather ultimate way, the degree of commitment to the teaching profession compared with both earlier data involving journalism educators and with non-journalism educators.

RQ3: Do Herzberg's job satisfaction predictor variables involving intrinsic and extrinsic job factors also predict job satisfaction of secondary school journalism educators?

Data for this research question was subjected to standard stepwise multiple regression analysis. Several items on the current survey were linked with Herzberg's motivation-hygiene factors for the analysis.

For example, the following items were used to ascertain job satisfiers:

- *Achievement:* Written an article and had it published in one of the journalism magazines or journals
- *Recognition:* Importance of prestige associated with teaching
- *Work itself:* Three items were used -- Desire to serve others; importance of education to society; and interest in the subject matter
- *Responsibility:* Freedom one has in deciding how to teach one's own courses
- *Advancement:* Offered a position for more salary in educational administration
- *Possibility of growth:* Opportunities for professional growth as a reason for selecting teaching.

The following items were used to ascertain the job dissatisfiers (hygiene factors):

- *Company policy, administration and supervision:* Amount of freedom school administrators allow those who advise student publications.
- *Working conditions:* Faculty morale at present; and change in faculty morale during the past few years
- *Salary:* Current annual teaching salary before taxes
- *Status:* How faculty in other departments at the school view the quality of the journalism program
- *Job security:* Job security as a reason for entering teaching as a career.

The final research question:

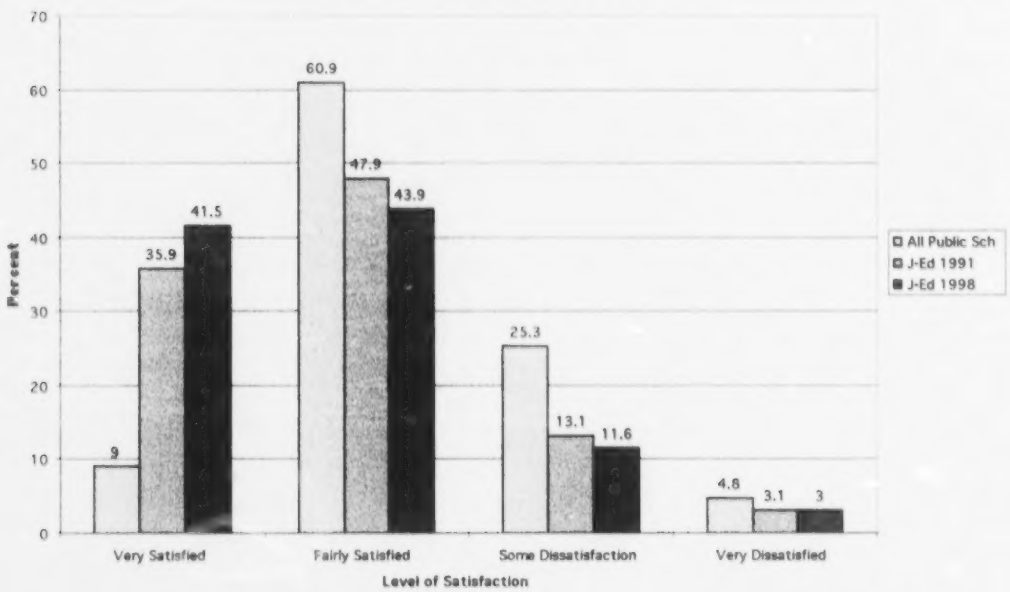
RQ4: To what degree do open-ended responses from high school journalism educators conform to the variables that are predictors of job satisfaction in the current study (as seen in *RQ3*)?

For this latter part of the study, we sent a short open-ended questionnaire to all 86 members of the North Carolina Scholastic Media Association listerv in the fall semester 2000. Altogether, 45 journalism educators responded (for a 52 percent response rate). Their responses are meant to validate and to provide a human dimension to the numerical findings.

Results

The first major finding is that high school journalism educators are a satisfied group. Figure 1 shows the degree to which three different groups of teachers answered this question: "All things considered, how satisfied are you with your present job?"

Figure 1: Job Satisfaction



The 1998 journalism educators in higher percentages are very satisfied with their jobs than were those journalism educators in 1991 -- and they are appreciably more satisfied than all public school teachers (Digest of Education, 1991). Overall, more than 85 percent of the 1998 journalism educators indicate strong or fair degrees of satisfaction while nearly 84 percent of the 1991 journalism

educators indicate satisfaction. By contrast, a little less than 70 percent of all public school teachers indicated general job satisfaction. Other studies of high school educators in all disciplines have shown even less satisfaction.

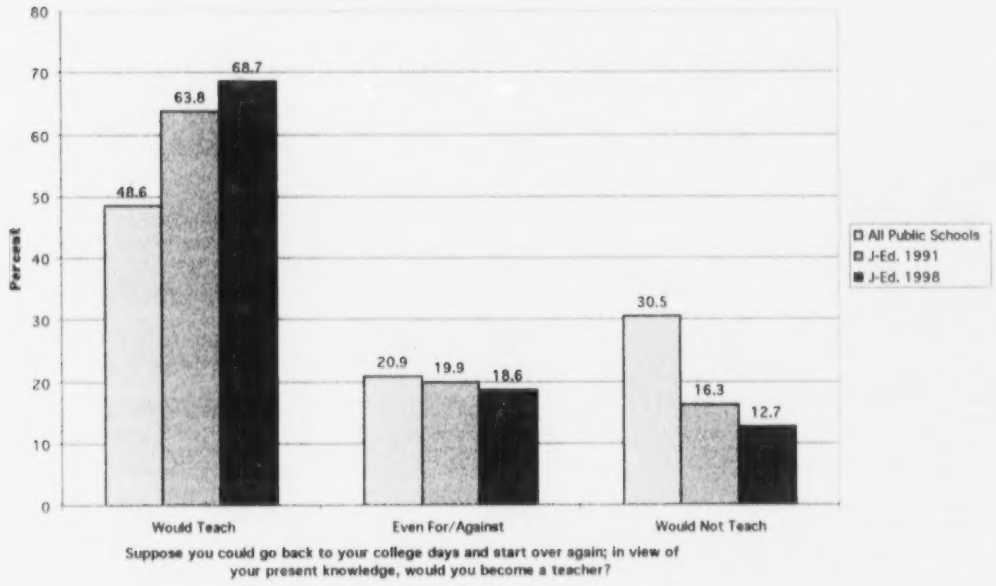
For example, Heller (1992) found only 58 percent of 339 teachers he studied to be generally satisfied. Moore's 1987 study of 489 Southern California teachers showed that more than half were dissatisfied with teaching as a career -- mainly because of low status, poor pay and little power.

To examine the degree of commitment to teaching, we asked the journalism educators whether or not they would return to teaching if they could return to their college days and start all over again. We should note here that the average number of years the 1998 group had in teaching was nearly 15; they had an average of nearly 9 years as media advisers. In the 1991 study of journalism educators, each of those comparisons was nearly one year less.

Figure 2 shows differences among the three groups. The journalism educators in 1998 were more than 20 percentage points higher than non-journalism counterparts in agreeing that they would teach if they had it to do all over again. In 1998, nearly 69 percent of the journalism teachers said

they would return to teaching while less than 49 percent of the all-disciplines group claimed they would return.

Figure 2: Teach Again?



Interestingly, a higher percentage (68.7 percent) of journalism teachers in 1998 than those in 1991 (63.8 percent) claimed that they would teach if starting their careers again.

For *RQ3* a stepwise multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify which of the motivation-hygiene job satisfiers/dissatisfiers (predictor variables) were significant predictors of journalism teacher job satisfaction (criterion variable). Results of the analysis are presented in Table 1.

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Table 1: Predictors of H.S. Journalism Educator Job Satisfaction

	Job Satisfaction	
	Zero-Order[a]	Beta Weight
Faculty morale	.48***	.36***
Offered an administrative job in education	-.26***	-.19***
Current salary	.17***	.16***
Importance of education to society	.10*	.11**
Freedom in how to teach courses	.23***	.10**
Faculty morale change in the past few years	.33***	.11**
Job security	.13***	.07*
Written and published article in journal	-.09*	-.06
Prestige associated with teaching	.13**	.07
Opportunities for professional growth	.10*	.06
Desire to serve others	.12**	.10*
Interest in subjects taught	.06	.05
Freedom from administrative control of publications	.19***	.09*
Other faculty members' views of J-quality	.11**	.02
Tenure	-.09*	-.10*
Adjusted R-square		.32

[a] Person correlations

* p <.05
** p <.01
*** p <.001

For the overall equation, 7 of 15 independent variables were statistically significant predictors of teacher perceptions of job satisfaction. They are working conditions (faculty morale and faculty morale change during the past few years), advancement (offered administrative

post), salary, the work itself (importance to society), responsibility (freedom in how to teach one's courses), and job security.

These are a mix of Herzberg's motivation-hygiene factors that lead to job satisfaction. The motivators -- assumed to be those variables leading to intrinsic satisfaction -- are advancement, the work itself and responsibility.

The hygiene factors -- assumed to include those variables that provide extrinsic satisfaction and whose absence result in job dissatisfaction -- are faculty morale, salary, morale change among the faculty, and job security.

Of the 15 variables in the study, 14 were significantly related statistically to job satisfaction as measured by Pearson correlations (Table 1).

For *RQ4*, North Carolina advisers were asked three basic open-ended questions: Would they teach again if they could start all over? What aspects make them satisfied with their current job (and why)? What aspects make them dissatisfied with their current job (and why)?

Several responses would indicate general agreement with the work itself as a satisfier.

- One yearbook and newspaper adviser wrote: "I like journalism teaching because the kids love it so. It allows kids to think, dream, voice opinions -- all very important in a complete education."
- A newspaper adviser wrote: "This course empowers students like no other course. Students learn some important things in journalism about teamwork, personal responsibility and being nice to older adults like me."
- A 31-year veteran journalism educator wrote that she originally did not choose to teach journalism; rather, it chose her. She wrote that most years she chooses to teach it again "chiefly because I saw the need for publications that could communicate fairly, clearly and accurately, and I thought I could help students learn to do that."
- One adviser, who had spent 10 years as a reporter before she got into teaching, wrote that she felt satisfied because students feel ownership in the final product and take pride in their writing, editing and design skills.
- Another teacher-adviser, referring to the many extra hours it takes to be in journalism education, wrote: "I feel as though I put in millions of hours at

school and related to school. Much of this is my own choice. If I'm going to teach, I want to teach well."

- Related to advancement in their jobs, another intrinsic satisfier, several advisers listed people and organizations that provide resources and acknowledgement for their work. Among them are help from local journalists and editors; national certification programs run by the Journalism Education Association, including the Certified Journalism Educator and Master Journalism Educator designations; and state endorsement in journalism following the earning of appropriate credit hours in journalism.

Among dissatisfiers, many journalism educators mentioned rocky relationships with administrators and other factors we found among the variables in *RQ3*. A representative sampling of the 45 respondents' answers follows:

- Several teachers-advisers agreed that lack of appreciation from administrators and some parents for all the work that goes into the production of the paper or other media is the factor most detrimental to their satisfaction.

- Lack of time haunts most of the educators in the study. One wrote: "Advising the student newspaper seems like a full-time job, in addition to my full-time job of teaching English to freshmen and AP juniors. Frustration comes in the form of learning how to use computer hardware and software."
- Many journalism educators think no average or normal week exists. A yearbook teacher-adviser wrote: "When copy is due at the printer's, we stay until we finish. On weekends I average around five hours on the job." (Our national study shows that a typical adviser spends about five-and-a-half hours per week doing advising during non-school hours.)
- Working conditions can also be seen as a dissatisfier among several teachers who wrote comments like the following about effects of the job on their personal lives: "If my marriage were not secure and my husband not so sympathetic and willing to wait for me, I would have had to quit years ago. My children have suffered because of the time I put into this job. I hope the sacrifices I have made for my yearbook students have been worth the price my family has paid."

- Administrative policies and approaches were other dissatisfiers for some teachers who answered the open-ended questionnaire. One said he would not advise a bright young person to become a teacher because teaching today "destroys human dignity" and that "autocratic behavior of most principals would make it difficult for a teacher to build a real journalism program."
- Several advisers listed technical equipment -- like computers, scanners and cameras -- and better working areas as things they needed from administration. These elements among working conditions did not in themselves bring satisfaction when present, but they did bring dissatisfaction when absent, confirming Herzberg's own study of accountants and engineers in 1959.
- Also within the "company policy and administration" area was a comment about what journalism educators wanted more than the physical support. What is valued is "an administration that understands press rights and responsibilities, that supports student efforts. (I wish that) journalism were more important to my school district, not from a funding standpoint but for support with issues of

censorship, stated purposes and policies of school papers, in-service for teachers and, most importantly, the training of principals about the role of the school paper."

Conclusions

Despite heavy demands on time and other stress-producing aspects of the work itself, high school journalism teachers are a satisfied group. Our study shows that when compared with non-journalism teachers, journalism educators seem considerably more satisfied with their current jobs. Fully 85 percent of journalism educators in a recent national random sample indicated that they were satisfied. Only 70 percent of the non-journalism educators claimed that they were happy in their present jobs.

When asked if they would return to teaching if they could return to college and start all over again, nearly 70 percent of the journalism educators said they would. This is an increase of 5 percentage points from 1991, when a similar random sample of journalism educators was surveyed. Also, it is a stark contrast with a similar sample of high school teachers from other disciplines who would return to teaching at a rate less than 50 percent.

Our multiple regression analysis showed that a mixture of intrinsic and extrinsic factors were predictors of journalism educators' job satisfaction.

Intrinsic factors that led to satisfaction were in the areas of

- *Advancement:* Our question asked if journalism educators wished to improve their lot by being "promoted" to an administrative post with higher pay. This was negatively correlated with satisfaction, meaning that educators did not see administration as a satisfying step; rather, they were happier staying put as teachers-advisers.
- *Work itself:* Importance to society was the most significant of the predictors in this area though also positively related were the importance of serving others and an interest in the subject area, though the latter was not statistically significant.
- *Responsibility:* Journalism teachers in the study found a good deal of satisfaction when they had the freedom to teach their courses in ways they saw fit rather than having an administrator micro-manage classroom comportment.

Unlike Herzberg's findings, the current study found four hygiene (extrinsic) factors that were statistically significant predictors of job satisfaction. They are

- *Working conditions:* Faculty morale at the school was the top predictor of job satisfaction among all seven significant predictors. Also, morale change in the school (for the better) during the past several years was also a predictor, though a weaker one than current morale.
- *Salary:* Current salary was the third most powerful predictor of job satisfaction. Generally, we found that teachers at higher pay levels had more satisfaction with their jobs. Teachers at all levels had general satisfaction with salaries -- perhaps because they didn't enter the field with high expectations of large salaries. Also, teacher pay scales provide an equity that few other fields provide. That is, teachers know that they will be rewarded for years of service, for attainment of more education, and in some cases for merit. Most journalism educators also earn extra pay for advising media.
- *Job security:* This was the weakest of the seven predictors, yet a significant one. Teachers, while

having lower pay scales than counterparts in some private industries, do have job security as a perquisite -- at least once tenure has been earned.

Open-ended responses by North Carolina journalism educators to a listserv request gave credence to many of the predictors. Remarks tended to center around the work itself, especially the importance of journalism to students educationally; various aspects of policies and administration, especially budgetary support and attitudes toward censorship; advancement in terms of earning state and national certification; and working conditions, particularly related to deadline pressures and amount of time needed to do the job well.

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